

WATER, FIRE, WIND, AND SOIL AS THE IDEAS OF CREATION OF GRAPHIC ART WORK

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ABSTRACT

The creation of this graphic work considers the reciprocal relationship between art and the environment as well as its preservation with an Eco Art perspective. The creation of this Eco-Graphic work uses the Artistic Creation approach which includes experimentation, reflection, and formation (art structure). This Eco Graphic work is inspired by the stimulation of creating water, fire, wind and soil in Javanese philosophy which is then processed in such a way that it becomes a graphic art work in an eco art perspective. Through inner research or inner wandering, the creator is able to visualize the work of Eco Graphic after discovering triangles, circles and lines as the main motive with the abstract expressionism model.

Keywords: Eco art, creative stimulation, and graphic arts.

ABSTRAK

Penciptaan karya grafis ini mempertimbangkan relasi timbal-balik antara seni rupa dan lingkungan hidup serta pelestariannya dengan perspektif Eco Art. Penciptaan karya Eco Grafis ini menggunakan pendekatan Kreasi Artistik yang meliputi eksperimen, perenungan, dan pembentukan (struktur seni). Karya Eco Grafis ini diilhami dengan rangsang cipta air, api, angin, dan tanah dalam falsafah Jawa yang kemudian diolah sedemikian rupa sehingga menjadi karya seni grafis dalam perspektif Eco Art. Melalui riset batin atau pengembaraan batin, penulis/creator mampu memvisualisasikan karya Eco Grafis setelah menemukan bentuk segitiga, lingkaran serta garis sebagai motif pokok dengan model abstrak ekspresionisme.

Kata kunci: Eco art, rangsang cipta, dan seni grafis.

1. Introduction

Creative design of graphic art works in the perspective of Eco Art as an innovative design with the concept of art creation as personal expression or a symbol

of personal expression (fine / pure art) using the "abstract expressionism" model. The form of this work of art departs from the creative stimulation of the energy of water, fire, wind, soil, which are the energy that are inseparable from themselves and the universe. This view is known by the Javanese community as "*Keblat Papat Lima Pancer*" in Javanese cosmogony. The creative stimulation then becomes inner enrichment in the working process which is a personal inner expression.

The artistic creation entitled "*Rangsang Cipta Air, Api, Angin, Tanah sebagai Penciptaan Karya Seni Grafis dalam Perspektif Eco Art*" is a graphic art work in Eco Art perspective, which was created with the inspiration of the Mandala number 4 + 1 concept. The creation of this graphic art work is focused on the reciprocal relationship between art and the environment as well as its preservation by creating graphic arts. Preservation can be defined as preservation, namely maintaining, caring for and protecting. Conservation is preservation in the form of value development and utilization. Art has two very different aspects. On the one hand, traditional art refers to what already exists, while on the other hand, art longs for new creation and innovation, always pursuing things that never existed. This side of art always craves novelty, which is something new (Adi, 2017).

In the modern era there are more and more natural damage and environmental pollution. There are many alternatives that must be built so that the environment can be sustainable, while in the art world, one of them is using Eco Art. Eco Art as its 'umbrella' was then combined with modern art, especially abstract expressionism, as the process of creation. This combination is a strategy so that graphic artists can contribute in preserving and saving the environment.

Water, fire, wind, and soil in the *Kejawen* philosophy are very important, because they are related to the formation of human. The 4 elements are believed to be *Keblat Papat Kalima Pancer*. The container of the human being itself, is formed and consists of 4 elements, namely the elements from water - fire - earth and air / wind. Elements totaling four or 4 elements are present and exist in the universe (Pranoto, 2007).

For followers of the *Kejawen* mystical Islam, said that human come from 4 physical and spirit elements or supernatural substances given by God. The four elements according to the *Kejawen* are *sedulur papat* (four brothers) (Achmad, 2019). The teaching of maintaining balance vertically and horizontally in Javanese culture is known as *Keblat Papat Kalima Pancer*, also known as "World Time", known as the classification of the four dimensions of space with a four cardinal pattern with one center (4 + 1). Together means the whole, the basic unity of conflict towards control. Together means the whole, the basic unity of conflict towards control, which means that the unity that occurs because of differences, and differences is the basis of strength that must be strived for as a balance, harmony in life by means of self-control (Dharsono, 2016). Self-control is an effort to control human passions, when human passions can be controlled, then human will not damage their natural environment. Most of the damage to nature in this world is done by human hands.

The creation of graphic art in the perspective of Eco Art uses an artistic creative process, including experimentation, reflection, and formation (art structure). The main object of this work is inspired by the creative stimuli of water, fire, wind, earth and then processed in such a way as to become a work of graphic art. The objectives of the creation of this work are (1) Exposure of the concepts used in the creation of graphic artworks from the Eco Art perspective, (2) Visualization of graphic arts in the perspective of Eco Art.

2. Literature Review

This study tries to examine works and literature to be used as a reference, an approach, or a basis for this artistic research.

2.1. Graphic Art

Graphic art is also a part of fine art in two-dimensional form that is produced through the printing process. The advantage of graphic art is that it can be reproduced without reducing its originality. Techniques for making graphic arts include high print, deep print, flat print, and screen printing (serigraphy). The above statement seeks to explain the notion of conventional graphic arts clearly and their four printing

techniques (Bahari, 2007).

There are many types of techniques in graphic arts, one technique that is very popular among students and artists as well as the general public is relief print. This kind of printing is in great demand because relief print does not require equipment and lots of materials and can be done anywhere. And most importantly, high print has distinctive characters that are difficult to imitate because of its woodcut characteristics (Adi, 2020). High print is easier to do anywhere than other printing techniques.

Monroe Beardsley in *Problems in Philosophy of Criticism* explains that there are 3 characteristics or steps to make / become good (beautiful) characteristics of aesthetic objects in general, the three characteristics are: 1) Unity, this aesthetic object is arranged in a good or perfect shape; 2) Complexity, the aesthetic object or work of art is not very simple, but rich in content or elements that are opposite or contain of soft differences; 3) Intensity, a good aesthetic object must have a certain quality that stands out and is not just something empty. It does not matter what quality it contains (for example, a gloomy or happy atmosphere, gentle or rude character), as long as it is something intensive or truly (Dharsono, 2016).

2.2. Eco Art

Eco Art is an ‘umbrella’ term for art developed through a paradigm which believes that art can no longer be viewed solely from its aesthetic aspects, but should also be taken into account the reciprocal relations between art and the environment in which art lives and develops (Marianto, 2017). An artist who is considered as an eco-artist is one who performs one or more of the following principles:

- a) Paying attention to the interconnected network of various aspects in the environment, including physical, biological, cultural, political, and historical aspects of interconnected ecological systems.
- b) Creating works using natural materials, or closely related to natural elements such as wind, water, or sunlight.
- c) Reclaim, restore, and remediate the damaged environments.
- d) Inform the public about the ecological dynamics and environmental problems that

we face together.

- e) Reviewing the ecological relationships, to creatively put forward new possibilities for co-existence, sustainability, and healing (Marianto, 2017).

2.3. Javanese Doctrine

Kejawen (Javanese philosophy) always discussed until it reached an understanding of the substance of *Sangkan Paraning Dumadi*. Furthermore, this understanding underlies the belief of the *Kejawen* people in God. Javanese society knows about the time system in the cosmic space, which is an inseparable relationship between himself and the universe. This view is known by the Javanese community as *Keblat Papat Kelima Pancer*, in Javanese cosmogony (Simuh, 1988). For *Kejawen* people, that human come from 4 elements that are physical and spirit or magical life given by God. The four elements according to the *Kejawen* as *sedulur papat* (four brothers) concepts are:

- a). The soil with a black color (dark character) is an element that forms the lust of *Aluamah*, human have the instinct to eat and drink to be used as energy in their lives. From this energy, humans can carry on their life and actively carry out activities.
- b). Fire with a red color (hot character) is an element that forms the desire for *Amarah* (anger) of human, human have a courageous instinct in experiencing various dangers, are passionate about doing work, and never give up before their goals are achieved.
- c). The wind with a yellow character (with a beautiful character) is an element that forms lust of *Supiyah* for human. Through *supiyah* lust, human will always appear charming and love beauty, literature, art, and romance. Human who are dominated by *Supiyah* lust tend to become writers and artists-devotees of beauty.
- d). Water with white color (holy character) is anasir that forms lust of *Mutmainah* for human. Through *Mutmainah's* lust, human tend to like to do good, uphold love, religion, and always think positively. Because of *Mutmainah* lust, human can fulfill good deeds as commanded by God.

Manunggaling Kawula-Gusti literally means the united between the servant (human) and God. The meaning of the word "united" in this context is not the union of matter, but the union of God's will. Another meaning, human will must be equated (adjusted) with God's will. All of God's commands must be carried out by human.

Kasampurnaning Dumadi is a living teaching based on the Sufistic principles of Prabu Yudistira. A person who wants to achieve a living *kasampurning* (perfectly) must carry out the four steps (4 practices), namely:

- a) *Hamemayu Hayuning Pribadi*, practices *Hamemayu Hayuning Pribadi*, which means maintaining body and soul health.
- b) *Hamemayu Hayuning Kaluwarga*, practices *Hamemayu Hayuning Kaluwarga*, which means maintaining peace and harmony in the family.
- c) *Hamemayu Hayuning Samaan*, practices *Hamemayu Hayuning Samaan*, which means to establish brotherhood regardless of ethnicity, religion and race.
- d) *Hamemayu Hayuning Bawana*, practices *Hamemayu Hayuning Bawana* means maintaining world peace (Achmad, 2019).

2.4. Abstract Expressionism

In Abstract Expressionism, the expression of lines and colors tends not to be geometric, and there are two types that are classified as Abstract Expressionism, namely "color field painting", the lines and colors expressed tend to display bursts, plot plots, and expressive forms on canvas (Dharsono, 2016). Abstract Expressionism developed everywhere, most prominently in America with the characters like Jackson Pollock.

Jackson Pollock, an abstract expressionist painting artist from the United States. This artist has a very strong character in his work. This work is the result of exploration in painting to find a strong personal character, namely action painting. This work is very interesting from a technical perspective, especially the paint splashing technique.



Figure 1. Jackson Pollock is painting
(Photo : Hans Namuth Courtesy Center;
Source : <https://www.tate.org.uk/kids/explore/who-is/who-jackson-pollock>)

The graphic art work created by artist Tisna Sanjaya from Bandung uses the etching technique with body printing, Tisna Sanjaya is a graphic artist who really cares about environmental issues, so that his works always criticize pollution, destruction etc. This work is very interesting from a technical point of view, especially the etching technique with his body as a medium for work and playing in black and white colour.



Figure 2. Tisna Sanjaya's graphic work using etching techniques
(Photo: Dhamarista Intan, Source : <http://www.balairungp.ress.com/2018/08/pem-benahan-diri-dan-lingkungan-dalam-sujud-tisna-sanjaya/>)

This graphic art work created by artist Sri Maryanto from Yogyakarta uses hardboardcuts, particularly woodcut techniques. This work was created because of

the artist's anxiety regarding the damage to the natural environment, especially air and water pollution, which have spread everywhere. This work invites human to be aware in managing the environment.



Figure 3: Sri Maryanto's graphic work uses woodcut techniques (2006)
(Source: <https://www.flickrriver.com/photos/orabersm/>)

Willem De Kooning, a painting artist with an Abstract Expressionist from the Netherlands. His work entitled *Woman* is a very strong work in terms of personal character. De Kooning explores to find his personal character.



Figure 4: *Woman*, a painting by Willem de Kooning with abstract expressionism style.
(Source : <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79810>)

3. Creation Methodology

This design is included in the Practice-Led Research category, namely a research

strategy carried out through practice, mainly using certain methodologies and methods that are familiar to practitioners (*Guntur & Sugihartono, 2015*). The practical activities in this study are art and design practices. This artistic research was conducted using the artistic creation method. The use of emic and ethical data is data that artists use in the process of artistic creation, including experimentation, reflection, and formation (art structure) (*Dharsono, 2016*).

a. Experiment

Experiments are steps of activities carried out by artists and / or designers in carrying out the steps of the artistic creation process, include: (1) trying several alternative materials, individual techniques, and tools that are suitable for expressions in artistic creation, as well as selecting visual concepts (structure). The author uses high printing techniques with the consideration that it is familiar and easy to practice anywhere, and can be combined with any media such as used paper material, used MMT (Metromedia Technologies) banner etc.

2. Reflection (Mental Research)

Reflection is the artist's mental spirit wandering in search of a symbol (metaphor) that will become in the process of artistic creation. In the process of artistic creation, the writer found triangles, circles and lines which then become the main motifs in Eco Graphic art.

3. Formation

Formation is a structure or composition designed to get the form or structure of the work. The structure will produce dynamics (soft, medium, and strong), and these dynamics will produce a certain atmosphere and / or a certain impression.

4. Discussion

4.1. Creative Process

The author uses the concept of personal expression in the abstract expressionism model, with creative stimulation of the energy of water, fire, wind, soil with a structure arrangement. Abstract expressionism is chosen with the consideration that the writer is accustomed to working quickly and expressively. In addition, the creation of graphic

art in the perspective of Eco Art is used as a symbol of the personal expression of the creator.

The visualization of the work of graphic art creation in the perspective of Eco Art is in accordance with the inner research or inner journey of the author who found triangles, circles and lines to be the main motifs with the form of abstract expressionism. Used paper and plastic materials are used as printing / reference materials for later collage on used plywood to be printed on canvas. The use of used paper and plastic is a medium of expression for the creation of this Eco Art graphic art. This work does not only emphasize the aesthetic aspect, but also considers the reciprocal relationship between art and the environment.

Various experiments on materials and media were carried out in order to achieve maximum results. The author uses a high printing technique, because this technique is very familiar and easy to practice anywhere, and can be combined with any media such as used paper material, used MMT. etc. The materials and tools used include oil-based ink, rolls, woodcut tools, plywood, harboard (mdf), also used MMT media, used plastic, used paper, and canvas.

4.2. Art Work Description



Figure 5. *Mutih*, size A4, 40 panel, woodcut on used paper, edision 2/3
(Creator: Sigit Purnomo Adi, 2020)

This graphic art work entitled "*Mutih*" is composed with personal artistic expression as a symbol of personal expression with creative stimuli from fire and earth. This work tells about human efforts to control oneself in restraint of lust. In Javanese society, "*mutih*" is one of the fasts recommended by Sunan Kalijaga. "*Mutih*" means reducing eating both white rice, tubers, and drinking fresh water for 40 days which is useful for reducing *Amarah* (anger lust).

This graphic artwork depicts the creative stimuli of fire and earth that are disappearing from time to time. Fire which symbolizes lust. *Amarah* and soil which symbolizes greed can decrease if we do "*mutih*" fasting. As it is the case when working on Eco Graphics, artists must control themselves against their anger and greed by working using materials that are synergistic with nature and the environment, for example used paper, in order to create harmony and balance in life to maintain the sustainability of the ecosystem.



Figure 6. *Loro-Lorong Atunggal*, 40x40 cm, 6 panel,
woodcut on the used paper, edition 2/3. (Creator: Sigit Purnomo Adi, 2020)

This graphic art work entitled *Loro-Lorong Atunggal* is composed of personal artistic expression as a symbol of personal expression with creative stimuli from water and wind. This work tells about the view of the Javanese when they combine two into

one or the union of man and his God. When human can unite with God, they can automatically control their desires for balance or harmony. Like when creating Eco Graphic, an artist must unite with his God to control himself against *Mutmainah* and *Supiyah* lust.

5. Conclusion

The concept of personal expression here takes the theme of creative stimulation to the energy of water, fire, wind and earth with an Abstract Expressionism model. Abstract Expressionism was chosen as a working model because the creator is accustomed to working quickly and expressively. In addition, the Eco Art perspective is used as a symbol of personal expression in the creation of this graphic art work, so that Eco Graphic artworks can be produced. The visualization of this Eco Graphic work is in accordance with the inner research or inner journey of the creator who has found triangles, circles and lines as the main motives in Eco Graphic art which is Abstract Expressionism.

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